

Thorns in Mossflower-part 2

by Rose

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Summary: Benji and Pansy tell the Abbey elders of their experience, and Takney's son declares to avenge his father's murder...

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>
The Redwall elders were holding a council of war.

>
Benji and Pansy had gasped out their stories as soon as they returned safely inside the Abbey's walls. It had started to pour with rain

>on thier journey home, and they ran inside, dripping wet and gasping for breath as a thunder clap sounded out across the skies. Everyone had been devastated
at the story of Takney Beech, he had left behind a loving wife, Rudey, three huge daughters, Elm, Sycamore and Hazel, and one son, just

>as big as his father and nearly twice as tall as his mother and sisters. His full name was Silverbirch, but most called him Silver.

As Abbey champion, he was heading the meeting, with Abbot Benedict and Roselyne, the Abbey' s youngest ever recorder, a beautiful squirrel maid, at his side.

>
Roselyne was pouring over parchments, scrolls and old volumes that she had brought over with her from the gatehouse. She swept a stand of her bright red hair out of her eyes

>and sneezed, making dust fly everywhere. "I'm never going to find it!" She exclaimed.

>"Well, what are you looking for?" Pansy asked impatiently, who didn't always get on with the squirrel (who had always been cleverer than her).

>"I'm tring to find something I read a while ago, mentioning that medallion you say the fox was wearing" she replied, pointedly ignoring the snear in Pansy's voice.

>Benji stooped down and picked up something under the table. It was an old scroll. He handed it to Roselyne. "Come this be it Rose?"

>Roselyne scanned it quickly, and noddod excitedly. "This is the one! It must have flown off the table when I sneezed, you're so wonderful

and clever Benji!" Benji
blushed to the tips of his ears and muttered something inaudible.
>
Abbot Benedict was handed the document and he read it carefully. It says here that a group of travelling hares from Salamandastron

>visiting Redwall told of a horde of foxes lurking around on the shore. Two spies overheard the leader giving a 'pep talk' to his army
before they were defeated in a battle against the Long Patrol. He said, and I quote "Remember who is your leader, you are ruled by

>Fadiento, he who wears the medallion passed from the very gods of our race..." He goes on to remind the foxes of how his medallion was dropped out of the sky
and killed a challenger trying to kill the old leader. The vermin took this as a sign that their gods were on their current leaders side

>and no one challenged him again. From then on the leader has always been one of his descendants and while he wears, this prize,
none can challenge him"

>
"And now the remnants of the horde beaten at Salamandastron all those years ago have grown and got a new leader, and are attacking Redwall" Silver mused.

>"Well, there's only one thing for it. We'll have to start training a defence army of our own. I would hate war to come to my beloved home, but if it does, we shall not go down without a fight. And I swear now, that my sisters
and I will take our revenge, and slay that evil vixen and the rest of her brood!"

>
A cheer went out in the small town, while rain beat relentlessly outside the red sandstone Abbey.

> ~
The next day Skipper of otters, Lady Primrose of the squirrels in Mossflower (a descendant of Lady Amber, who still lived with a band of trusty squirrels following her

>in Mossflower Wood) and even Log-a-Log of the Guosim were all assembled in Redwall's grounds, supervising the training of Redwall's defence.
The whole day was spent for preparing for a night raid style attack on their home.

>
It never came.

> ~
A whole week passed uneventfully. Some beasts even forgot about the threat of a whole horde of foxes seated outside the Abbey.

>
"They must have had spies watching us day and night" Silver said bitterly. "And we've played right into their hands, practising right

>into the open, now they'll know all our weaponry strengths and weaknesses. The only thing to do now is to act as though we've forgotten,
give them a false sense of security. But where can we practise if we don't want any foxes to see us?"

>
Skipper smiled. "Just leave it to me, me ol' mate. I'll sort that 'un for you!"

>
The next hour saw a perfectly organized group of archers, slingers and javelin and lance throwers aiming at five ringed targets in the Great Hall.

>As the archers dropped and reloaded the slingers shot at the targets, and then the lances and pikes and so on. Practices went on like this for the next few weeks,
until one night, when there was knock on the heavy front gates of Redwall.

>
Roselyne sped up the steps onto the battlements. Outside the door was an enchanting young vixen, along side an older vixen and a large cart. Behind her hidden behind trees were

>what looked like a horde of well over ten score foxes. She zoomed back down and reported this to Silver. He held a whispered conference

with Skipper, Log-a-Log
and Lady Primrose. and slowly opened the doors. Concealing a slingshot behind his back he greeted the vixen.

>
"May I be of help, my sister? All travellers are welcome into Redwall"

>
The vixen smiled sweetly. "I am but a travelling herbilist, mayhap I can sell you and your good Abbey a few harmless herbs to help with sickness and bad health.

>If you would just open the door wide I could bring in my cart and show you what I have?"

>"Why certainly! Come right in! An older vixen, but just as enchanting as her evil daughter, appeared pulling a large plain white covered cart.

>"May I interest you with..." the younger vixen was cut short as Silver caught her a glancing blow to the side of her face with a large pebble from his sling shot.

>"We are not fools here. We know well enough there are others of you outside our very gates, please, come and have a go, unless you were
basing all your hopes on a single, petty vixen?"

>
A voice sounded out clear from the cart. "You say you are not fools. So why let two score foxes into your beloved home?" The fox

>Benji and Pansy had seen weeks back strolled out and jumped nimbly to the side of his mate, and kicked the limp body of his daughter aside.
"My daughter is not dead, she will live to fight another day. Unlike you. For this you shall pay. With your lives"

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End
file.